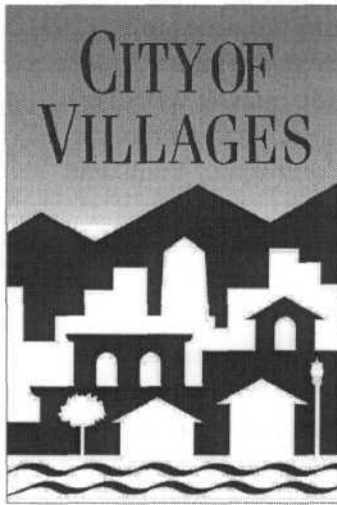


THE CITY LAND USE PLANNING PROCESS

MYTHS AND LEGENDS
THE COW FARM



General Plan Strategic Framework Element Update

The City Council adopted the Strategic Framework Element and Five-Year Action Plan in October 2002. The Strategic Framework Element provides the overall structure to guide the General Plan update, including future community plan amendments. It contains a strategy called the City of Villages, which shifts future growth from our once abundant open land to reinvesting in existing communities. This approach represents how the City will grow while preserving the character of existing communities, natural resources and overall quality of life.

The Planning Department has developed an aggressive work program to implement the Five-Year Action Plan. This effort falls into five basic categories: Existing Conditions, Pilot Villages, General Plan Elements, Community Plan Initiatives, and Key Implementation Activities. The top priority action items for each are summarized below.

Existing Conditions Data Collection

The Planning Department is coordinating with all City departments and working with community planning groups to collect, format and maintain data related to existing land use, public facilities and infrastructure, air quality and other areas pertinent to future planning

efforts. These include updating the City's General Plan, updates and amendments to community plans, future environment analysis, and development of a financing strategy for public facilities and infrastructure.

Pilot Village Program Implementation

The Pilot Village Program is intended to demonstrate how the village concept can be realized citywide through the selection and construction of three Pilot Villages. This critical component of implementing the City of Villages strategy offers an opportunity to gain widespread public support. Phase I, which is currently underway and will conclude in June 2004, demonstrates how villages can revitalize communities. Three pilot village projects will be selected, site planning work will take place, the entitlement process will be initiated, and funding sources identified. Phase II will include procurement of funds, development approvals, and construction. Full implementation is projected between 2006 and 2008.

Update the General Plan

The Planning Department will update the following eight elements and conduct

required environmental analysis for City Council consideration in June 2005.

1. Conservation Element - The Conservation and Environment Element will combine existing conservation, energy, open space and cultural resources elements. The City Council has emphasized the importance of these policies toward achieving City environmental protection and energy independence goals.
2. Economic Prosperity Element - A new Economic Prosperity Element will provide comprehensive and cohesive citywide policies concerning economic and land use, and guide the development of implementing strategies, programs, and regulations. This element will combine existing Commercial, Industrial and Redevelopment elements. The policies will relate to employment land availability, regional infrastructure, business development, equitable development, education and workforce development, balancing jobs and housing needs, and border issues.
3. Housing Element and Housing Programs - This element will be updated in accordance with the five-year cycle mandated by state law. The objective of the update is to provide adequate housing to serve San Diegans of every economic level and demographic group. This work activity also includes implementation of housing programs in the current Housing Element, preparation of the Annual Housing Progress Report, preparation of an Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, amendments to the Companion Units Ordinance, and a Density Bonus Ordinance. It will also include staff support to the Affordable Housing Task Force, which is developing additional strategies to address San Diego's housing crisis.
4. Land Use Element - The Land Use Element will utilize the City of Villages Opportunity

Areas Map and the Strategic Framework Element guidelines to identify potential areas for future villages on a citywide map. It will also clarify the relationship between the General Plan and Community Plans and outline a format for preparing and updating community plans.

5. Mobility Element - A new Mobility Element will be drafted with a multi-modal focus to implement the policies of the Strategic Framework Element and MTDB's Transit First initiative. The goal is to provide mobility choices and improve accessibility for all San Diegans through improved transit services, pedestrian amenities, bicycling facilities, and targeted road projects.
6. Public Facilities, Services, and Safety Element - This element will address the equitable provision of public facilities and services throughout the City. The element will focus on the establishment of citywide priorities for the provision of facilities; provide guidance for the Community Plan Facilities elements; establish citywide facilities standards that are flexible but provide an equivalent level of service; identify financing options for village development including private investment; and establish policies to maintain service levels as the population grows.
7. Recreation Element and Park Master Plan - The Recreation Element will include policies to improve equitable public access to recreational resources and facilities, protect and enhance regional parks, and expand options for how communities can meet existing park and recreation standards. A Park Master Plan will be developed that

includes a needs assessment and implementation strategies to meet urban park needs.

8. Urban Design Element - This element will contain policies designed to enhance San Diego's livability and distinctiveness. This effort will include workshops to deal with issues including "Big Box" development. The element will incorporate the City's adopted Transit-Oriented Development Design Guidelines to provide guidance on how to achieve pedestrian-oriented village development that maximizes the use of transit.

Community Plan Amendment Process

The community plan amendment process is being revised to implement recommendations raised by the Planning Commission and City Council during the Strategic Framework hearing process. Revisions will include: developing criteria for community plan amendments that propose an increase in residential density; ensuring that appropriate zoning is applied to implement the community plans; and preserving the integrity of community plans. The estimated completion is December 2003.

Financing Strategy

A Financing Strategy for public facilities must be developed to secure additional funding to remedy existing facilities shortfalls. The Planning Department is working with the City Manager to identify a broad range of citywide needs, including public facilities and infrastructure, maintenance, affordable housing and open space acquisition. These needs will be linked to existing and potential new funding sources. This includes developing a structure for connecting the community financing and phasing plans to the City's Capital Improvement Program. Ultimately, the City Council could make decisions on funding sources and place financing measures on the ballot for a public vote.

Components of the Financing Strategy include:

1. Refining the \$ 2.5 Billion estimated short fall through existing conditions data collection.
2. Regional Planning - Take a leadership role as a part of SANDAG, as well as other regional forums to accomplish open space preservation, mobility, economic prosperity, and regional financing needs.
3. Legislation - Assist in a unified City effort to further a legislative agenda for smart growth.
4. Inter-Agency Coordination - Continue to work with other agencies and coordinate on projects of mutual interest, including working with San Diego City Schools on a pilot project to design an urban, joint-use school campus.

Public Involvement

Citizens are working with the City to make the recently adopted Strategic Framework Element, Action Plan, and City of Villages strategy a reality. Partnerships will ensure that stakeholders including residents, community planning groups, local businesses, government agencies, developers and others are involved with the City in the decision-making process. The Planning Department is networking with community leaders to capitalize on cultural diversity and expand the civic voice in the planning process.

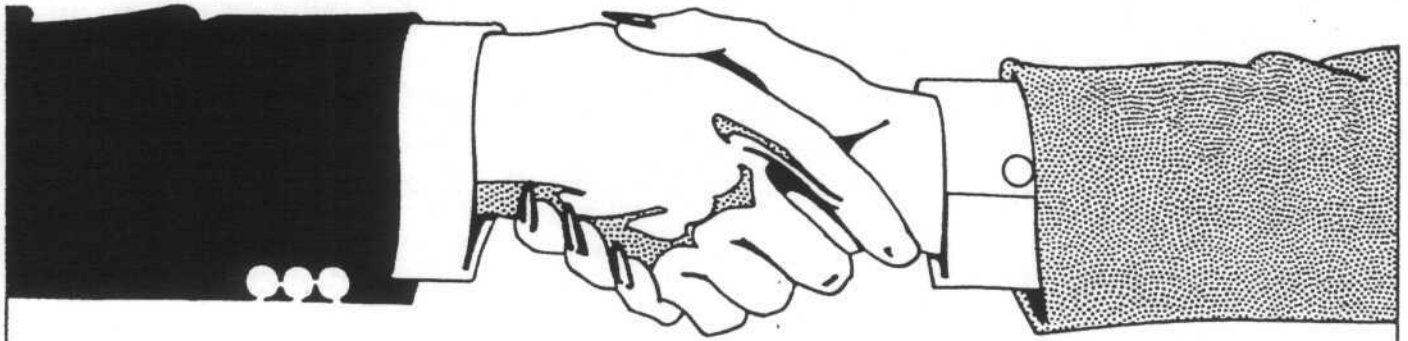
The Planning Department has developed a comprehensive strategy to provide open dialogue with citizens and foster consensus-building on challenging planning issues. A variety of communication methods are being utilized including quarterly public forums, citizen surveys, a planning hotline, meetings with community planning groups, issues

workshops with the Planning Commission and the City Council's Land Use and Housing Committee, and formation of facilitated meetings on special interest topics.

To generate enthusiasm about planning issues and help citizens make informed decisions as they vote on planning related ballot initiatives, information and educational materials are being provided to key stakeholders and the general public. A variety of communication tools are being used including mailings, an e-mail network, posting draft documents on the City's website, press releases, feature stories, news articles, educational programs and group presentations.

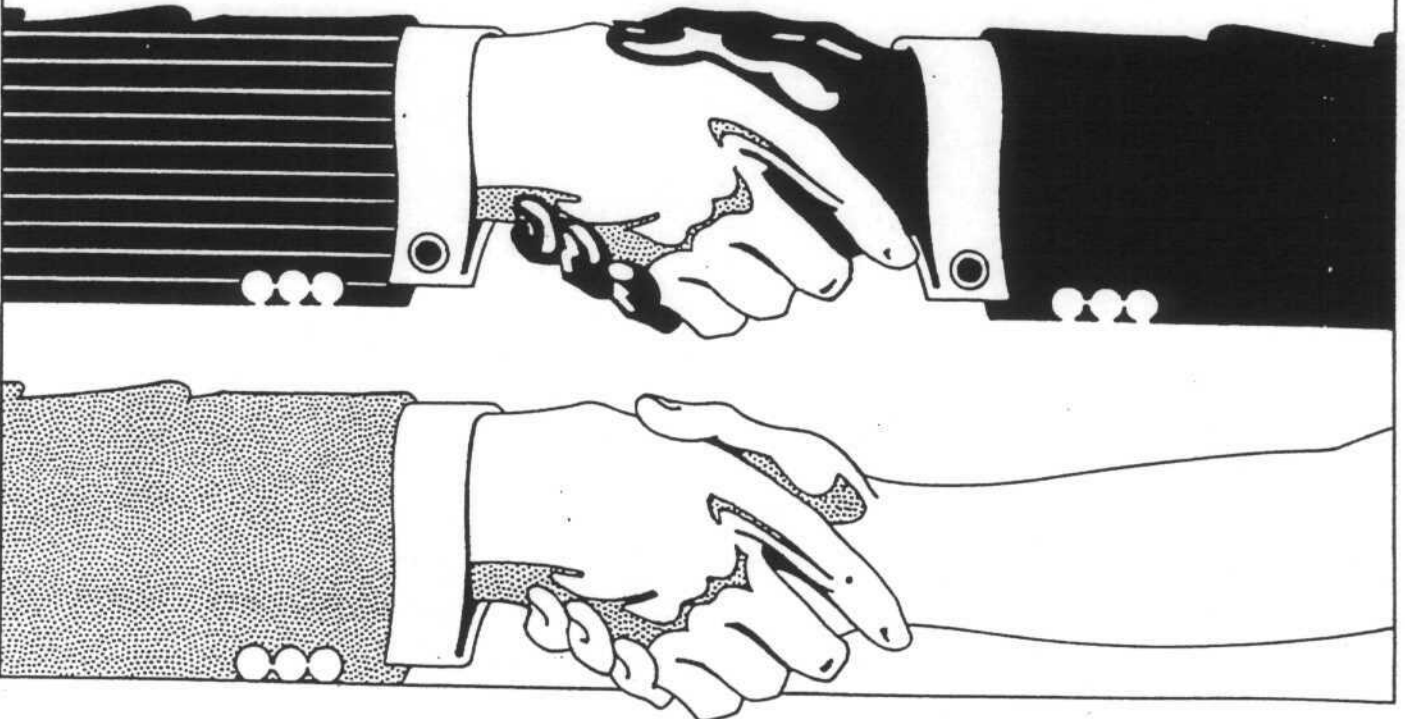
Information about the General Plan, Strategic Framework Element Updates, City of Villages Strategy and Action Plan can be found online at

www.sandiego.gov/cityofvillages. Citizens can also call the General Plan Hotline at (619) 235-5226.



THE COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS

A guide for the Citizen
2000



City of San Diego • Planning Department

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INTRODUCTION

Since its incorporation in 1850, San Diego has experienced steady growth. The need to plan for and to guide this growth has always been the responsibility of city government and citizens working together. In 1966, the City Council **formalized** this government-citizen relationship with the **adoption** of Council Policy 600-5. Under this policy, citizens who wish to participate in the planning process are able to form **officially** recognized planning committees. These committees **work with** the Planning Department to formulate and implement community plans and to advise the Planning Commission and the City Council on planning issues in their respective communities.

In an effort to assist planning committee members and other interested citizens in understanding the planning process, this report outlines some basic information. The following pages **explain**, in brief, the nature of **community** plans, the preparation of plans **and the ways** in which plans are implemented. The respective roles of city government and the planning **committees** and their relationship to each other is explained.

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY PLAN?

A *community plan* is a public document which contains **specific** proposals in a given community for future land uses and public improvements. The community plan provides a long-range physical development guideline for elected officials and **citizens** engaged in community development. The community plan recommendations are, **however**, guidelines which cannot be implemented by the adoption of the plan alone. Concurrent with or subsequent to plan adoption a series of Implementation programs must be begun **if** the recommendations of the plan are to become reality. Zoning **controls**, a public facilities financing **plan**, the Capital Improvements Program, and **monitoring** of new development

projects by the community **and the** City **are** all methods of Implementing community plans. These and other implementation methods are explained later in this document.

WHAT IS ZONING?

Zoning is the legislative method by which land use, intensity of development, and site design and architectural design are controlled. Some zones apply to all or many parts of the City while other zones, called planned **districts**, apply **only** to very specific sections of the City. This specialized zoning addresses issues of land development which are specific to the area designated as a planned district. A third type of zoning, called "overlay zones", add special regulations to the regulations of the underlying zone. The Hillside Review Overlay Zone and the Institutional Overlay Zone **are** two examples of this type of zone. All types of zoning promote the grouping of land uses which are compatible to one another and control development so that property can be adequately serviced by public facilities.

WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A COMMUNITY PLAN?

A community plan must be all of the following:

1. **COMPREHENSIVE:** The plan should address all aspects of community development including: housing; transportation; commercial and industrial development; public facilities, such as **schools**, **parks**, libraries; urban design or the image of the community, and environmental issues, such as noise, hillside **preservation**, control of runoff and erosion.
2. **LONG-RANGE:** The plan should make recommendations which guide development over a long period of time. Development of a community is a process which takes many



years and which is an ongoing process. The **plan must** be based on not only **what** the community is **today**, but what development factors will likely occur in the future.

3. RELATED TO THE ENTIRE CITY:

Any community is only one segment of the City as a whole. The community plan must address not only issues within the community, but also City-wide issues as they relate to the community. No community exists separately from neighboring communities or isolated **from the** rest of the City. The Progress Guide and General Plan provides the outline for development of the City as a **whole**, and each community plan must work within this outline to guide development in the individual communities.

4. A VISION OF THE FUTURE:

As San Diego grows, so does each of its component communities. The plan must be a guide for that growth. While the plan is based on existing conditions in the community, it cannot be a document which does no more than **reflect** the status **quo**. The planning process is based on the assumption that change will occur (as is **inevitable** in any urbanized society), and the plan must be a document that envisions what those changes will be. The plan must be a document which guides the community toward the future.

5. IMPLEMENTABLE:

As stated earlier, the plan itself **does not** control development in the community. The recommendations of the plan must be implemented through the Zoning **Ordinance**, the Capital Improvements Program, a Public Facilities Financing **Plan**, monitoring of new **projects, etc.** The plan must **identify** what implementation methods are needed and must include recommendations for any new legislation which might be necessary to implement the plan.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

When preparing a community plan, several steps should be followed to develop rec-

ommendations which best guide the future development of the community. **Community** members and members of the Planning Department work together through these logical steps to develop the plans. While the community planning group provides invaluable information to the Planning Department **staff** to prepare the community plan **document**, the compilation by the Planning Department of all **information including**, but not limited to, the information **provided** by the community planning **committee**, is essential **if** an effective community **plan is to be** achieved. The following are the essential steps for the preparation of a community plan:

1. FORMULATION OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

a. An overall goal for the future of the community is established. This goal should be a vision statement of how the community develops **in the coming years**. The established goal **will be** the guide for all of the recommendations of the community plan, and its formulation is an important community function.

b. Goals **for each land use element** of the plan are established. These goals are specific to each of the land use elements and support the overall community goal. The formulation of these goals is also an important function of the planning committee.

c. The **objectives** of the community plan are defined. Objectives are sets of specific desired **effects** or **results**, or statements of intent, necessary for the community to pursue in order to achieve the goals of the plan. The objectives are in turn achieved through the specific recommendations of the plan.

2. RESEARCH

a. Existing conditions in the community are **identified**. Population **data**, existing land use information, public facilities needs and opportunities for growth in the community must be identified. This is primarily the function of Planning Department staff using recorded **data**, field investigation and input



from other City departments and government agencies.

b. Existing conditions in the community are compared and related to the City as a whole. The Planning Department staff **evaluates** the community as a part of the **City** to ensure that the community **plan is** an integral part of the City-wide planning process and includes implementation of City-wide policies.

3. DEVELOPMENT OF PROJECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

a. The appropriate level of development to be recommended for the community in the future is determined. The Planning Department together with community members, property owners and other interested persons and agencies, must determine **how much** and where the community should grow. Existing conditions data as well as **City-wide** and community expectations for growth are analyzed to determine how the community should change and what must be done within the context of the community goals to accommodate that change.

b. Recommendations are developed to channel growth. Based on input from the **community**, property owners, other City departments and agencies, the Planning Department staff develops recommendations for changes **in land** use, transportation and public facilities. These recommendations are designed to guide growth and change in the **community** into the future.

4. PLAN DRAFT PREPARATIONS AND REVIEW

a. Planning Department staff prepares a **first** draft of the community plan. This draft includes issues, goals and objectives, existing conditions, recommendations for location and intensities of land use and public facilities **needs**, as well as implementation methods.

b. The plan draft is distributed to the community planning **committee**, City departments and other interested government agencies. The draft is **discussed**, reviewed and

requests for revisions or issues with the plan draft are submitted in written form to the Planning Department.

c. An environmental review of the draft by the City **determines** whether or not any of the plan recommendations will have an environmental impact on the community or the City. If there are environmental impacts, an Environmental Impact Report will be prepared which will identify mitigation measures that may be necessary to adopt the plan. If there are no environmental impacts, a Negative Declaration will be prepared.

d. All recommended revisions or issues raised are investigated and considered, and the Issues are addressed to the extent possible in a second draft which is also distributed and reviewed. Additional drafts may or may not be necessary, depending on the number and complexity of issues in each individual community.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS & ADOPTIONS

a. A public hearing before the Planning Commission is scheduled to discuss the draft plan. Notices are usually mailed to all property owners within the community as well as property owners outside the community whose property is within 300 feet of the community boundary. Notices are also published in a designated newspaper of general circulation.

b. Public testimony is given before the Planning Commission with discussion and response by the Planning Commission and Planning Department staff. The Planning Commission may refer the plan back to the Planning Department for changes or may recommend that a City Council hearing be set and that the City Council approve the plan.

c. A City Council hearing is scheduled by the City Clerk and notices are sent **in** the same manner **as** for the Planning Commission hearing.

d. Public testimony and discussion occur at the **City** Council hearing, and the City Council may refer the plan back to the Planning Department for changes or may approve



the plan. If the plan is referred back for **changes**, a second **City** Council hearing must be held. Once the **City** Council approves the plan, **it** is adopted and may not be amended except by the **City** Council through the public hearing process.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

a. Zoning **in** the community should **be in conformance with** the recommendations of the plan. Zoning is revised to conform to the plan either at the time of the adoption of the plan or a plan **update**, or soon thereafter. Since zoning **is** usually the most **widespread** tool used to implement the **plan**, it is very important that zoning conform to the recommendations of the plan. It is also very Important that zoning be brought **into** conformance with the plan **in** as timely a manner as possible **if** the plan is to be effectively Implemented.

b. Special land use **regulations** such as planned districts or overlay zones may **also be used** to implement a plan. These special **regulations** may be used instead of conventional City-wide zoning or **in** addition to City-wide zoning. Special regulations **are used** to implement plan recommendations that require special attention and which cannot be fully implemented through conventional zoning regulations.

Special regulations may require that a discretionary permit be granted by the City. Such a permit may be approved or disapproved depending on an applicant's ability to meet design or improvement expectations of the community plan, **such as** providing open space areas which directly benefit the community and the **City**. Discretionary **permit** proposals may be reviewed by the planning committee which then makes a recommendation to the City regarding the proposal. The **City**, the **applicant**, and the community may not always agree about discretionary permit proposals, but reaching compromise solutions is one aspect of the **planning** process.

c. Plan amendments are sometimes applied **for** by property owners or proposed by

the community. Any change to the community **plan must** go through the same **analysis/** review/public hearing process that the original **plan** went **through**. **At this time**, the processing of plan amendments is guided by Council Policy 600-35 which requires a cumulative **impact** analysis of all proposed amendments. Consequently, plan amendments are grouped according to sectors of the **City**, and all of the proposed amendments within each sector are heard together.

d. Public Facilities Financing Plans are prepared to outline the **major** public facilities improvements needed in a community and to establish a schedule for the construction of those facilities. The plan also outlines the costs of the facilities and frequently sets up funding sources to pay for land acquisition, design and construction. Money **may be paid into** a fund, called a Facilities Benefit Assessment **fund**, through the collection of development fees which are paid as part of new construction permit fees. Public facilities financing plans are prepared for all communities.

CONCLUSION

*The planning process is an ongoing process. Although the preparation of the plan document usually takes one to two **years**, the implementation of the plan continues over a period of many years. Once a **plan** is adopted, the community planning committee and the City must make sure that development projects adhere to **the** plan recommendations and that the plan continues to be a valid projection of the future. The community planning committee and the citizens of the community **in** general must take the lead **in** advising the City **over** the years regarding the effectiveness of the plan. Continuity within the planning committee **is** very important and the planning committee and Planning Department staff must work to educate and train new planning committee members. Every member of a planning committee should be aware of what his or her role is **in** the planning process and should understand what is involved in the planning process. This guide **is** intended to be a part of this training.*



SUMMARY

Role of the Planning Committee

1. FORMULATION OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Study alternative goals and objectives
- **Establish** general and specific goals and objectives

2. RESEARCH

- Review data
- Advise **staff** of specific problems
- Review land **use** assumptions
- Evaluate implications of assumptions
- Inform public at large
- Encourage **citizen** participation

3. DEVELOPMENT OF PROJECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommend future levels of development which are appropriate to **community** needs and which fulfill the vision which the community has of itself for the future
- Develop **corresponding** recommendations to channel growth at appropriate levels

4. PLAN DRAFT PREPARATION AND REVIEW

- Review draft and identify points for discussion
- Meet with Planning Department staff to discuss draft and ask questions
- Suggest modifications to plan draft

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ADOPTION

- Encourage citizen **participation**, understanding and support
- Participate in Planning Commission hearings
- Participate in City Council hearings

6. IMPLEMENTATION

- Promote public and private action programs
- Review applications for specific projects
- Participate in review of requests for plan amendments



COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS

PLAN PREPARATION

INITIATE PROCESS

The community plan update/amendment process can be initiated by: Planning Groups, Developers, Planning Dept., City Council.

IDENTIFY ISSUES

Community **issues/problems** are identified by the Planning Groups.

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

Existing conditions may include demographic data, land use, traffic, public **facilities**, community character, school enrollment, etc.

FORMULATE GOALS, POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

Plan policies will guide development and provide the needs required by future and existing residents. Environmental and **traffic** analysis initiated.

PREPARE PLAN ELEMENTS AND EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES

Various scenarios for the ultimate development of the community require evaluation.

FORMULATE RECOMMENDATIONS

The community plan process **is** designed to provide the specific recommendations necessary to resolve community problems.

IMPLEMENTATION

Planning tools used to implement **the** recommendations set forth **in** the plan include **zoning**, financing, phasing, setting priorities, etc.

PLAN REVISIONS

FINAL PLAN

PUBLIC MEETINGS

COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP MEETINGS

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

PLANNING COMMISSION

CITY COUNCIL

